

## WAC 197-11-960 Environmental checklist.

### ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

#### *Purpose of checklist:*

The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), chapter 43.21C RCW, requires all governmental agencies to consider the environmental impacts of a proposal before making decisions. An environmental impact statement (EIS) must be prepared for all proposals with probable significant adverse impacts on the quality of the environment. The purpose of this checklist is to provide information to help you and the agency identify impacts from your proposal (and to reduce or avoid impacts from the proposal, if it can be done) and to help the agency decide whether an EIS is required.

#### *Instructions for applicants:*

This environmental checklist asks you to describe some basic information about your proposal. Governmental agencies use this checklist to determine whether the environmental impacts of your proposal are significant, requiring preparation of an EIS. Answer the questions briefly, with the most precise information known, or give the best description you can.

You must answer each question accurately and carefully, to the best of your knowledge. In most cases, you should be able to answer the questions from your own observations or project plans without the need to hire experts. If you really do not know the answer, or if a question does not apply to your proposal, write "do not know" or "does not apply." Complete answers to the questions now may avoid unnecessary delays later.

Some questions ask about governmental regulations, such as zoning, shoreline, and landmark designations. Answer these questions if you can. If you have problems, the governmental agencies can assist you.

The checklist questions apply to all parts of your proposal, even if you plan to do them over a period of time or on different parcels of land. Attach any additional information that will help describe your proposal or its environmental effects. The agency to which you submit this checklist may ask you to explain your answers or provide additional information reasonably related to determining if there may be significant adverse impact.

#### *Use of checklist for nonproject proposals:*

Complete this checklist for nonproject proposals, even though questions may be answered "does not apply." IN ADDITION, complete the SUPPLEMENTAL SHEET FOR NONPROJECT ACTIONS (part D).

For nonproject actions, the references in the checklist to the words "project," "applicant," and "property or site" should be read as "proposal," "proposer," and "affected geographic area," respectively.

#### A. BACKGROUND

1. Name of proposed project, if applicable:

Programmatic Hydraulic Project Approval for beaver related maintenance of drainage facilities, primarily road culverts.

2. Name of applicant: WDFW lands program capitalize lands program

3. Address and phone number of applicant and contact person:

Richard Tveten

1111 Washington Street SE

Olympia, WA 98501

4. Date checklist prepared:

April 15, 2013

5. Agency requesting checklist:

WDFW

6. Proposed timing or schedule (including phasing, if applicable):

Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA) approval date through expiration date five years thereafter.

7. Do you have any plans for future additions, expansion, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain.

No, but WDFW may reapply when the 5-year programmatic permit expires.

8. List any environmental information you know about that has been prepared, or will be prepared, directly related to this proposal.

A Joint Aquatic Resources Project Application has been prepared.

9. Do you know whether applications are pending for governmental approvals of other proposals directly affecting the property covered by your proposal? If yes, explain.

No.

10. List any government approvals or permits that will be needed for your proposal, if known.

The programmatic Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA).

11. Give brief, complete description of your proposal, including the proposed uses and the size of the project and site. There are several questions later in this checklist that ask you to describe certain aspects of your proposal. You do not need to repeat those answers on this page. (Lead agencies may modify this form to include additional specific information on project description.)

Conduct beaver related maintenance of drainage facilities, primarily clearing of dam materials from road culverts, on WDFW wildlife areas. Devices like "beaver deceivers" may be also installed to reduce the need for such maintenance in the future.

12. Location of the proposal. Give sufficient information for a person to understand the precise location of your proposed project, including a street address, if any, and section, township, and range, if known. If a proposal would occur over a range of area, provide the range or boundaries of the site(s). Provide a legal description, site plan, vicinity map, and topographic map, if reasonably available. While you should submit any plans required by the agency, you are not required to duplicate maps or detailed plans submitted with any permit applications related to this checklist.

Numerous wildlife areas throughout Washington State. Maps and driving directions for all wildlife areas are provided at

[http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife\\_areas/](http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife_areas/)

## B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

### 1. Earth

a. General description of the site (circle one): Flat, rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous, other . . . . .

WDFW wildlife areas contain a wide variety of vegetation from estuaries to subalpine meadows and rain forests to arid steppe. Habitat conditions vary from pristine to agricultural lands.

b. What is the steepest slope on the site (approximate percent slope)?

Vertical cliffs (90%) present on some wildlife areas but work is anticipated in low gradient areas utilized by beavers.

c. What general types of soils are found on the site (for example, clay, sand, gravel, peat, muck)? If you know the classification of agricultural soils, specify them and note any prime farmland.

A wide variety of soils are present including clay, silt, loam, gravel, peat and muck. Prime farmlands are located on numerous wildlife areas.

d. Are there surface indications or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity? If so, describe.

There are parts of wildlife areas with unstable soils areas including 1) lands on the Mount St. Helens wildlife area that were destabilized by eruptions/debris flows and a landslide on the Methow Wildlife Area following a wildfire. Maintenance activities related to beaver damming of drainage facilities is not expected to destabilize such areas. Such activities may, however, be undertaken to prevent the destabilization of roads and dams.

e. Describe the purpose, type, and approximate quantities of any filling or grading proposed. Indicate source of fill.

The purpose of maintenance projects include removing dam materials and restoring water levels to rectify flooding that can cause

- inundation of roads and adjacent properties
- instability of impoundment dams and roads
- Blocking of water intake to fishways, irrigation systems, etc.
- Interference with restoration or enhancement projects.

f. Could erosion occur as a result of clearing, construction, or use? If so, generally describe.

Yes. Maintenance activities will largely entail removing dam materials such as wood, other organic materials, mud and rocks. Some of the mud used to dam culverts and other structures could become suspended when materials are removed.

Precautions will be taken to prevent erosion of stream bed materials.

- Work will be scheduled to minimize activity during high flows.
- Water will be slowly released to avoid erosion that could lead to turbidity.
- Methods will be site-specific and based upon the safest and least impacting method to perform the work.
- Devices to prevent beavers from damming critical drainage structures like road culverts may be installed in conjunction with removal activities to reduce the need for future removal activities.
- Woody material deeply imbedded into the bed or banks of the waterbody will not be disturbed.

Note: Work will often be conducted to prevent potentially large erosion events such as road and dam failures that could occur when facilities are not properly maintained

g. About what percent of the site will be covered with impervious surfaces after project construction (for example, asphalt or buildings)?

None.

h. Proposed measures to reduce or control erosion, or other impacts to the earth, if any:

Work will often be conducted to prevent potentially large erosion events such as road and dam failures that could occur when facilities are not properly maintained

Precautions will be taken to prevent erosion of stream bed materials including.

- Work will be scheduled to minimize activity during high flows.
- Dammed water will be slowly released.
- Methods will be site-specific and based upon the safest and least impacting method to perform the work.
- Devices to prevent beavers from damming critical drainage structures like road culverts may be installed in conjunction with removal activities to reduce the need for future maintenance activities.
- Woody material deeply imbedded into the bed or banks of the waterbody will not be disturbed.

## 2. Air

a. What types of emissions to the air would result from the proposal (i.e., dust, automobile, odors, industrial wood smoke) during construction and when the project is completed? If any, generally describe and give approximate quantities if known.

Not applicable.

b. Are there any off-site sources of emissions or odor that may affect your proposal? If so, generally describe.

Not applicable.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control emissions or other impacts to air, if any:

Work will be done by hand or with hand tools whenever possible.

### 3. Water

#### a. Surface:

- 1) Is there any surface water body on or in the immediate vicinity of the site (including year-round and seasonal streams, saltwater, lakes, ponds, wetlands)? If yes, describe type and provide names. If appropriate, state what stream or river it flows into.

There will be surface water bodies at all maintenance sites including year-round and seasonal streams, lakes, ponds and wetlands. Waterbodies where work could potentially occur are too numerous to list.

- 2) Will the project require any work over, in, or adjacent to (within 200 feet) the described waters? If yes, please describe and attach available plans.

Yes. All work will be over, in or adjacent to water. Design plans not applicable. In general, dam materials will be removed such that structures are clear of dam materials and pre-existing conditions are restored. Beaver deceiver designs will be site specific.

- 3) Estimate the amount of fill and dredge material that would be placed in or removed from surface water or wetlands and indicate the area of the site that would be affected. Indicate the source of fill material.

No fill will be placed. An estimated 5 yards of material will be moved. Moved material will be allowed to flow downstream to be repositioned in the system, be placed along the bank, or be removed from the site. All large woody material will be repositioned within the system.

- 4) Will the proposal require surface water withdrawals or diversions? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.

No.

- 5) Does the proposal lie within a 100-year floodplain? If so, note location on the site plan.

Many of the potential maintenance locations lie within 100-year floodplains.

- 6) Does the proposal involve any discharges of waste materials to surface waters? If so, describe the type of waste and anticipated volume of discharge.

Not applicable. Work will only involve moving of natural materials already on site.

#### b. Ground:

- 1) Will ground water be withdrawn, or will water be discharged to ground water? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.

No.

- 2) Describe waste material that will be discharged into the ground from septic tanks or other sources, if any (for example: Domestic sewage; industrial, containing the following chemicals. . . ; agricultural; etc.). Describe the general size of the system, the number of such systems, the number of houses to be served (if applicable), or the number of animals or humans the system(s) are expected to serve.

Not applicable.

#### c. Water runoff (including stormwater):

- 1) Describe the source of runoff (including storm water) and method of collection and disposal, if any (include quantities, if known). Where will this water flow? Will this water flow into other waters? If so, describe.

Not applicable. No new water will be introduced. Water flow patterns will be allowed to gradually return to conditions that existed prior to damming of drainage structures.

2) Could waste materials enter ground or surface waters? If so, generally describe.

Not applicable

d. Proposed measures to reduce or control surface, ground, and runoff water impacts, if any:

Work will often be conducted to prevent potentially large erosion events such as road and dam failures and that could occur when facilities are not properly maintained

Precautions will be taken to prevent erosion of stream bed materials.

- Work will be scheduled to minimize activity during high flows.
- Dammed water will be slowly released.
- Methods will be site-specific and based upon the safest and least impacting method to perform the work.
- Devices to prevent beavers from damming critical drainage structures like road culverts may be installed in conjunction with dam removal activities to reduce the need for future dam removal activities.
- Woody material deeply imbedded into the bed or banks of the waterbody will not be disturbed.

#### 4. Plants

a. Check or circle types of vegetation found on the site:

☒ deciduous tree: alder, maple, aspen, other

☒ evergreen tree: fir, cedar, pine, other

☒ shrubs

☒ grass

☒ pasture

☒ crop or grain

☒ wet soil plants: cattail, buttercup, bullrush, skunk cabbage, other

☒ water plants: water lily, eelgrass, milfoil, other

☒ other types of vegetation

b. What kind and amount of vegetation will be removed or altered?

Minimal amounts of live plant material may be present and dams. Such materials will be placed in buffers where they may take root and grow. Placement of dam materials in stream and wetland buffers may disturb buffer vegetation. Also, buffer vegetation may be disturbed by workers or equipment accessing the work sites.

c. List threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site.

Potential maintenance sites could provide habitat for Snake River Sockeye Salmon, Upper Columbia River Spring-run Chinook Salmon, Snake River Spring/Summer-run Chinook Salmon, Snake River Fall-run Chinook Salmon, Lower Columbia River Chinook Salmon, Lower Columbia River Coho Salmon, Lower Columbia River Chum Salmon, Upper Columbia River Steelhead, Snake River Basin Steelhead, Lower Columbia River Steelhead, Middle Columbia River Steelhead, Puget Sound Chinook Salmon Puget Sound Steelhead and Hood Canal Summer-run Chum Salmon.

d. Proposed landscaping, use of native plants, or other measures to preserve or enhance vegetation on the site, if any:

The need for landscaping is generally not anticipated. Dam materials will be scattered such that the impacts to vegetation are minimal. If planting is needed in access routes, only native species will be used. When available, on-site plant materials such as willow cuttings will be used.

#### 5. Animals

a. Circle any birds and animals which have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site:

birds: hawk, heron, eagle, songbirds, other:



mammals: deer, bear, elk, beaver, other:  
fish: bass, salmon, trout, herring, shellfish, other:

**All apply**

- b. List any threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site.  
Snake River Sockeye Salmon, Upper Columbia River Spring-run Chinook Salmon, Snake River Spring/Summer-run Chinook Salmon, Snake River Fall-run Chinook Salmon, Lower Columbia River Chinook Salmon, Lower Columbia River Coho Salmon, Lower Columbia River Chum Salmon, Upper Columbia River Steelhead, Snake River Basin Steelhead, Lower Columbia River Steelhead, Middle Columbia River Steelhead, Puget Sound Chinook Salmon Puget Sound Steelhead and Hood Canal Summer-run Chum Salmon.
- c. Is the site part of a migration route? If so, explain.  
Yes. Numerous wildlife areas are parts of important migration routes for fish and wildlife. Some were acquired specifically to protect and preserve migration routes for deer and waterfowl.
- d. Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any:  
Wildlife areas are managed to preserve and enhance wildlife. The maintenance activities associated with the removal of beaver dam materials from drainage structures are intended to support overall wildlife area management objectives of preserving and enhancing wildlife.

**6. Energy and natural resources**

- a. What kinds of energy (electric, natural gas, oil, wood stove, solar) will be used to meet the completed project's energy needs?  
Describe whether it will be used for heating, manufacturing, etc.  
Not applicable.
- b. Would your project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties? If so, generally describe.  
Not applicable.
- c. What kinds of energy conservation features are included in the plans of this proposal? List other proposed measures to reduce or control energy impacts, if any:  
Work will be done by hand whenever possible. Maintenance activities are intended to prevent the need for energy intensive reconstruction activities.

**7. Environmental health**

- a. Are there any environmental health hazards, including exposure to toxic chemicals, risk of fire and explosion, spill, or hazardous waste that could occur as a result of this proposal? If so, describe.  
No.
- 1) Describe special emergency services that might be required.  
Not applicable.
- 2) Proposed measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any:  
Not applicable. Maintenance reduces the probability of hazards associated with flooding and road or dam failures.

**b. Noise**

- 1) What types of noise exist in the area which may affect your project (for example: traffic, equipment, operation, other)?  
Not applicable. Activities general occur in remote areas.

- 2) What types and levels of noise would be created by or associated with the project on a short-term or a long-term basis (for example: traffic, construction, operation, other)? Indicate what hours noise would come from the site.

Work could potentially entail brief noise associated with power tools like chainsaws or vehicles. Noise would most likely occur during normal 8-5 working hours. Activities general occur in remote, unpopulated areas.

- 3) Proposed measures to reduce or control noise impacts, if any:

Work will be done by hand whenever possible.

## 8. Land and shoreline use

- a. What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties?

Wildlife conservation and wildlife-related recreation.

- b. Has the site been used for agriculture? If so, describe.

Many wildlife areas are used to some degree for wildlife-centric agriculture.

- c. Describe any structures on the site.

Wildlife areas generally have few structures on them. Structures often include administrative facilities like offices, barns and sheds.

Other structures include roads, bridges, dams, trails and utilities such as power transmission lines.

- d. Will any structures be demolished? If so, what?

No.

- e. What is the current zoning classification of the site?

Open space, conservation, forestry or agriculture.

- f. What is the current comprehensive plan designation of the site?

Usually open space, conservation, forestry or agriculture.

- g. If applicable, what is the current shoreline master program designation of the site?

Variable. Wildlife areas occur within numerous jurisdictions and on various water types.

- h. Has any part of the site been classified as an "environmentally sensitive" area? If so, specify.

All wildlife areas should be considered environmentally sensitive.

- i. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project?

Not very applicable. No one resides at drainage structure maintenance locations. Around 50 with WDFW employees work on wildlife areas.

- j. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace?

None

- k. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts, if any:

Not applicable.

- l. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, if any:

This project entails maintenance activities intended to support existing and projected land uses.

**9. Housing**

a. Approximately how many units would be provided, if any? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.

Not applicable.

b. Approximately how many units, if any, would be eliminated? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.

Not applicable.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control housing impacts, if any:

Not applicable.

**10. Aesthetics**

a. What is the tallest height of any proposed structure(s), not including antennas; what is the principal exterior building material(s) proposed?

Not applicable.

b. What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed?

Not applicable.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts, if any:

Not applicable.

**11. Light and glare**

a. What type of light or glare will the proposal produce? What time of day would it mainly occur?

Not applicable.

b. Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views?

Not applicable.

c. What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal?

Not applicable.

d. Proposed measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts, if any:

Not applicable.

**12. Recreation**

a. What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity?

Most wildlife areas are designated as the areas for wildlife-related recreation.

b. Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe.

No.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation, including recreation opportunities to be provided by the project or applicant, if any:

Not applicable. Activities would help maintain the status quo.

**13. Historic and cultural preservation**



- a. Are there any places or objects listed on, or proposed for, national, state, or local preservation registers known to be on or next to the site? If so, generally describe.

Do not know. The project site is limited to beaver dams obstructing culverts and other drainage structures. It is unlikely that any of the structures that would be maintained are proposed for listing on preservation registers.

- b. Generally describe any landmarks or evidence of historic, archaeological, scientific, or cultural importance known to be on or next to the site.

It is not known if maintenance activities will occur at landmarks or locations where there is evidence of historic, archaeological, scientific or cultural importance. Investigations into such possibilities, and how to address them, will occur as maintenance needs arise.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts, if any:

Only beaver dam materials will be moved. Underlying stream bed or bank material will not be removed. No fill will be placed. Work will be completed by hand whenever possible.

#### 14. Transportation

- a. Identify public streets and highways serving the site, and describe proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plans, if any.

Approximately 1,400 miles of roads exist on wildlife areas with numerous access points. Small dams are present on numerous wildlife areas.

- b. Is the site currently served by public transit? If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop?

No.

- c. How many parking spaces would the completed project have? How many would the project eliminate?

Not applicable.

- d. Will the proposal require any new roads or streets, or improvements to existing roads or streets, not including driveways? If so, generally describe (indicate whether public or private).

No.

- e. Will the project use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? If so, generally describe.

No. Work will usually involve culverts under remote, primitive, lightly used roads.

- f. How many vehicular trips per day would be generated by the completed project? If known, indicate when peak volumes would occur.

One or two for one day per site.

- g. Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any:

Work can be coupled with other activities in the area.

#### 15. Public services

- a. Would the project result in an increased need for public services (for example: fire protection, police protection, health care, schools, other)? If so, generally describe.

No.

- b. Proposed measures to reduce or control direct impacts on public services, if any.

Not applicable.

16. Utilities

a. Circle utilities currently available at the site: electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system, other.

Not applicable.

b. Describe the utilities that are proposed for the project, the utility providing the service, and the general construction activities on the site or in the immediate vicinity which might be needed.

Not applicable.

C. SIGNATURE

The above answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the lead agency is relying on them to make its decision.

Signature: Richard T. Mel

Date Submitted: April 15, 2013

#### D. SUPPLEMENTAL SHEET FOR NONPROJECT ACTIONS

(do not use this sheet for project actions)

Because these questions are very general, it may be helpful to read them in conjunction with the list of the elements of the environment.

When answering these questions, be aware of the extent the proposal, or the types of activities likely to result from the proposal, would affect the item at a greater intensity or at a faster rate than if the proposal were not implemented. Respond briefly and in general terms.

1. How would the proposal be likely to increase discharge to water; emissions to air; production, storage, or release of toxic or hazardous substances; or production of noise?

The proposal would not cause increases to any of the above issues. It would, however, causing temporary alteration of flow as dammed water is allowed to gradually return to original conditions.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:

Not applicable.

2. How would the proposal be likely to affect plants, animals, fish, or marine life?

Marine life would not be impacted because beavers utilize fresh waters. The proposal is intended to prevent impacts to plants, animals and fish by maintaining the status quo.

Proposed measures to protect or conserve plants, animals, fish, or marine life are:

Work will often be conducted to prevent potentially large erosion events such as road and dam failures and that could occur when facilities are not properly maintained

Precautions will be taken to prevent erosion of stream bed materials.

- Work will be scheduled to minimize activity during high flows.
- Dammed water will be slowly released.
- Methods will be site-specific and based upon the safest and least impacting method to perform the work.
- Devices to prevent beavers from damming critical drainage structures like road culverts may be installed in conjunction with dam removal activities to reduce the need for future dam removal activities.
- Woody material deeply imbedded into the bed or banks of the waterbody will not be disturbed.

3. How would the proposal be likely to deplete energy or natural resources?

Not applicable.

Proposed measures to protect or conserve energy and natural resources are:

4. How would the proposal be likely to use or affect environmentally sensitive areas or areas designated (or eligible or under study) for governmental protection; such as parks, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, threatened or endangered species habitat, historic or cultural sites, wetlands, floodplains, or prime farmlands?

The purpose of the proposal is to facilitate maintenance of wildlife areas as fish and wildlife habitat, especially for threatened and endangered species. Such maintenance also protects prime farmlands both on wildlife areas and adjacent properties from inundation.

Proposed measures to protect such resources or to avoid or reduce impacts are:

Measures to protect historic or cultural sites will be established as site-specific maintenance needs are identified.

5. How would the proposal be likely to affect land and shoreline use, including whether it would allow or encourage land or shoreline uses incompatible with existing plans?

The proposal would not affect land and shoreline use beyond helping maintain the status quo.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce shoreline and land use impacts are:

Not applicable.

6. How would the proposal be likely to increase demands on transportation or public services and utilities?

Not applicable.

Proposed measures to reduce or respond to such demand(s) are:

7. Identify, if possible, whether the proposal may conflict with local, state, or federal laws or requirements for the protection of the environment.

Work will be conducted in a manner to ensure compliance with local state and Federal laws for the protection of the environment.